

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 SSM-03 DHA-05

ACDA-07 /108 W

-----001648 071957Z /73

R 071545Z SEP 77

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9168

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY ANTANANARIVO

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY SANA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 CAIRO 14884

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: EG, XF

SUBJ: AL MINISTERIAL COUNCIL ENDS ON MODERATE NOTE SEP 8

REF (A) CAIRO 14792, (B) CAIRO 14876,

SUMMARY: CLOSING ACT OF AL COUNCIL MEETING WAS MILD RES ON PORTUGAL, BASED ON PORTUGUESE ASSURANCES IT WILL HOLD OFF ON SENDING AMB TO ISRAEL AND WELCOMES PLO OFFICE IN LISBON. IN FOUR DAYS MEETINGS, COUNCIL ADOPTED MODERATE WORKING PAPER, DECIDED AGAINST SEEKING AMENDMENT TO UNSC RES 242, BUT LEFT DOOR OPEN FOR SUPPLEMENARY SC RES. REFUSED DISCUSS SOUTH LEBANON, TO DISCOMFITURE OF PALESTINIANS, AND TO CONDEMN ETHIOPIA, TO CHAGRIN OF SOMALIA. EGYPT AND SYRIA CLASHED AND ARE STILL OUT OF PHASE. MODERATION WAS HARD WON OUTCOME, BUT MODERATES WILL BE IN DIFFICULT POSITION IF THEY NOT ABLE TO STIMULATE US TO USE ITS INFLUENCE WITH ISRAEL. END SUMMARY

1. PORTUGUAL. FINAL ACTION OF AL MIN COUNCIL MEETING SEP 6 WAS APPROVAL OF MILD RES EXPRESSING CONCERN ON PORTUGUESE-ISRAELI RELATIONS. AL SYG RIAD SAID RES TOOK INTO ACCOUNT ASSURANCES FROM PORTUGUESE GOVT "TO SOME ARAB STATES" THAT I WILL HOLD IN ABEYANCE DECISION TO SEND AMB TO ISRAEL AND WELCOMES OPENING OF PLO OFFICE IN LISBON. COUNCIL DECIDED TO HOLD FURTHER CONTACTS WITH PORTUGUESE IN PREPARATION FOR DEFINITIVE RES AT NOV MEETING IN TUNIS. WE ARE TOLD LIBYA ACTING UNILATERALLY CANCELLED \$45 MILLION DEAL WITH PORTUGUAL AS SHOT ACROSS THE BOW.

2. RES 242. RIAD TOLD PRESS THAT "AMENDMENT OF RES 242 TO BECOME ACCEPTABLE TO PALESTINIANS WOULD BE GROSS POLITICAL CONFIDENTIAL

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ERROR." ANY RES IN RECOGNITION OF PALESTINIANS RIGHTS SHOULD BE TAKEN INDEPENDENTLY. AL SOURCE TELLS US THAT ONE RES CALLS ON SPECIAL SEVEN MEMBER COMMITTEE (REF A) TO COORDINATE WITH ARAB DELS RE POSSIBILITY OF INVITING UNSC TO ISSUE COMPLEMENTARY RES TO 242 ON RIGHT OF PALESTINIANS TO RETURN, TO SELF DETERMINATION AND TO INDEPENDT STATE, AND TO STUDY POSSIBILITY OF RAISING SETTLEMENT ISSUE IN UNSC. ACCORDING TO SOURCE, HOWEVER, DECISION TO PROCEED FROM UNGA TO SC NOT FIRM.

3. PALESTINIANS. PLO FORTUNES MIXED. PALESTINIANS SCORED GAIN IF REPORT CORRECT THAT UNGA DRAFT RES WILL REFER CLEARLY TO WEST BANK AND GAZA AS PALESTINIAN LANDS. ON QUESTION OF SOUTH LEBANON, HOWEVER, THEY CAME OFF LESS WELL. COUNCIL WENT ALONG WITH LEBANESE WISH NOT TO DISCUSS MATTER BY REJECTING PLO'S FIRST MEMO AND THEN REFUSED DISCUSS SERIOUSLY SECOND CONTAINING ALLEGATION US EMBASSY CONVEYING "ISRAELI ULTIMATUMS".

4. PLO-US DIALOGUE. NOT SUBJECT OF FORMAL DISCUSSION, BUT GOE CONTINUING TO CREATE UP BEAT ATMOSPHERE FOR POSSIBILITY OF DIALOGUE AS PART OF PEACE PROCESS. SEP 7 ISSUE OF MAJOR WEEKLY AKHIR SAA ESCALATED PROPOSITION WITH REPORT FROM "UN OBSERVERS" THAT PRES CARTER IS HOLDING SECRET CONTACTS PRELIMINARY TO

MEETING ARAFAT. MAGAZINE'S SOURCES CLAIM ENCOUNTER WOULD
TAKE PLACE IN CONTEXT UNGA. "PALESTINIAN SOURCES" SAID THAT
ARAFAT AND SADAT DISCUSSED MEETING WITH CARTER IN ALEXANDRIA
RECENTLY IN LIGHT OF "US CONDITIONS WHICH CALL ON PLO FIRST
TO RECOGNIZE 242 AND RIGHT OF ISRAEL TO EXIST." EXPECTATIONS
DUE TO "WAVE OF OPTIMISM WHICH PREVALIED FOLLOWING RECENT
STATEMENTS BY PRES CARTER." INDIRECT US-PLO DIALOGUE, AKHIR
SAA NOTES, ALREADY UNDERWAY THROUGH EGYPT, SYRIA AND SAUDI
ARABIA.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 CAIRO 14884

5. EGYPT-SYRIA: EDITORIAL COMMENTARY ON FORNMIN'S SUMMIT, ECHOING REMARKS MADE BY FAHMY IN HIS OPENING STATEMENT THAT ADOPTION OF HARD LINE BY ARABS WOULD SERVE ONLY INTERESTS OF ISRAEL, PUBLICLY REFLECTED STRONG DIFFERENCE IN APPROACH BETWEEN EGYPT AND SYRIA. WE ARE TOLD KHADDAM AND FAHMY CLASHED IN FIRST CLOSED SESSION, BUT THAT EGYPTIANS AND SAUDIS MANAGED TO STEER COUNCIL ONTO PATCH OF MODERATION. SOURCE MAINTAINED EGYPTIANS AND SYRIANS STILL COMPLETELY OUT OF PHASE.

6. HORN OF AFRICA. ACCORDING AL SOURCE, COUNCIL DECIDED UNANIMOUSLY TO GO NO FURTHER THAN EXPRESSIONS OF REGRET ON STRIFE IN HORN, DESPITE SOMALI INSISTENCE ON CONDEMNATION OF ETHIOPIA, IN ORDER AVOID OFFENDING OAU SENSIBILITIES. COUNCIL MAY ALSO HAVE WISHED TO AVOID CONSIDERING HORN AS "ARAB QUESTION" AS THIS COULD LEAD TO SOMALI INSISTENCE ON AL MILITARY INVOLVEMENT. INTERESTINGLY, AHAM SEP 7 SELECTED HORN ISSUE FOR ITS EDITORIAL, DESCRIBING COUNCIL'S HANDLING OF MATTER AS "DIRECT MESSAGE FROM ARAB GROUP TO SOME MAJOR POWERS (SOVS)" TO KEEP HANDS OFF ARABS.

7. COMMENT/ CONCLUSIONS NOTED FOR MODERATION AND FLEXIBILITY, HOWEVER GRUDGINGLY, GIVEN FROM SOME QUARTERS. ADOPTED WORKING PAPER CLEARLY ARTICULATED EVOLVING ARAB VIEW OF DISTINCTION BETWEEN ISRAEL BEFORE AND AFTER CONQUEST OF 1967. OLD DEMANDS, SUCH AS END TO ASSISTANCE AND EMIGRATION TO ISRAEL NOT ABANDONED, BUT QUALIFIED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS DISTINCTION. VISCERAL REACTIONS RESTRICTED TO SETTLEMENT ACTIVITY OF BEGIN GOVT, WHERE ARABS REASONABLY FEEL THEY ARE ON SOLID GROUND, TO EXCLUSION OF SELF-SPITING DEMANDS SUCH AS EXPULSION OF ISRAEL FROM UN. DETERMINATION TO CARRY ON WITH
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FIERCE POLITICAL STRUGGLE AGAINST ISRAEL HAS NOT DIMINISHED, BUT, WORKING PAPER INDICATES, ARABS SELECTING GROUND MORE CAREFULLY. FROM ARAB VIEWPOINT, PERHAPS, MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENT OF COUNCIL SESSION WAS DEFINITION OF ARAB GOALS IN CLEARER AND MORE WORKABLE TERMS. COUNCIL DECISION TO DISCUSS WORKING PAPER POSITION WITH ISLAMIC AND NONALIGNED REPS BEFORE PRES-

ENDING DRAFT RES WILL ALLOW THEM EVEN MORE FLEXIBILITY AT UN
SHOULD THEY DECIDE TO DISPLAY IT.

8. MODERATES, HOWEVER, WILL HAVE TO BE WARY OF FRUITS OF
VICTORY SINCE MAJOR CONCESSIONS ARABS SEE THEMSELVES AS
MAKING MAY NOT PAY OFF. POSITIONS LIKELY TO COME BACK TO HAUNT
THEM IF PEACE PROCESS DOES NOT MOVE FORWARD. HARDLINERS
SUCH AS SYRIA ARE IN ENVIABLE POSITION. DRAGGED INTO
MODERATE POSTURE, THEY HAVE NEVERTHELESS BANKED HEALTHY
ACCOUNT OF RESERVATIONS FOR USE IF ARABS FIND THEMSELVES
DRIVEN BACK TO HARD LINE IN FUTURE.

9. ARAB TACK IS OF IMMEDIATE INTEREST TO USG. FUTURE OF OUR
ROLE IN ME SETTLEMENT IS CLEARLY TIED UP WITH FORTUNES OF
THE MODERATES. INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT FOR THEIR POSITION AT
UNGA, WITH OR WITHOUT US ACQUIESCENCE, WILL MEAN NOTHING
TO ARABS IF US DOES NOT USE ITS INFLUENCE WITH ISRAEL IN WAY
THAT MOVES PEACE PROCESS SIGNIFICANTLY FORWARD. PRESSURES
ON MODERATES ARAB LEADERS ARE REACHING DANGEROUS LEVEL
AND ONLY IF EARLY PROGRESS ON SETTLEMENT IS MADE WILL THEY
BE VINDICATED AND STRENGTHENED. TEMPUS ANIMA REI.
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Message Attributes

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